

Glasgow Centre for Population Health response to Glasgow City Council's consultation on the Climate Emergency Implementation Plan (CEIP)

January 2021

The development of the Climate Emergency Implementation Plan follows the council's declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in May 2019 and recommendations made by Glasgow's Climate Emergency Working Group in August last year.

The implementation plan referred to in this consultation focuses on five main themes - communication and community empowerment, just and inclusive place, well-connected and thriving city, health and well-being and Green Recovery – in line with the UN's sustainable development goals.

GCPH question responses and comments on the questions posed in the consultation are provided in blue. The consultation questions and contextual information provided by Glasgow City Council is in black font.

1. Before starting this questionnaire did you read the Plan? Yes

2. If yes, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Plan?

Easy to read – **Tend to agree**

Easy to Follow - **Tend to agree**

Comprehensive – **Strongly agree**

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the target of carbon neutrality by 2030 is appropriate?

Strongly agree

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the overall net zero emissions target by 2045 is appropriate?

Strongly agree

This aligns with the Scottish Government target. It should be reviewed regularly with a more ambitious target being set if achievable.

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed plan sets out the right level of ambition to address the climate emergency in the city?

Tend to disagree

6. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the 5 thematic outcomes identified in the plan?

- **Communication and community empowerment**
- **Just and inclusive Place**
- **Well-connected and Thriving city**
- **Health wellbeing**

- **Green recovery**

Tend to disagree

These themes are relevant, in keeping with other Glasgow City Council strategies, acknowledge the need to protect the health of the most vulnerable, and importantly prioritise engagement with the Glasgow population. However, they do not provide much basis for understanding what types of actions are required to become carbon neutral/zero emissions across sectors and through individual actions. For example, the plan could instead be based around more topic-based themes like 'transport and moving around', a 'sustainable economy', 'circular activity'. This would match more easily with the agreed actions.

7. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the plan does enough to address the possible negative impacts (job losses, high fuel bills) as we move towards a low carbon economy?

Tend to disagree

Clearly actions to de-carbonise the city and its economy will result in some job losses and will have cost implications where the transition to renewable sources of energy is expensive. This transition has the potential to affect people on low incomes the most. The departure from gas heating in new homes should be accompanied by safeguarding financial measures.

Theme 1 - Communication and Community Empowerment

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following actions?

1 - The city will develop a dynamic Climate Change Communications strategy for the city. This will be developed with Sustainable Glasgow and aligned with COP 26.

Strongly agree

2 - Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, Glasgow Life and Glasgow City council engage in a series of climate conversations across the city, in collaboration with community institutions. Fostering community confidence, empowerment and participation using the Place Standard tool and participatory budgeting.

Strongly agree

3 - Create a declaration for city institutions to pledge to become Carbon Neutral by 2030 or sooner.

Strongly agree

The inclusion of a declaration for city institutions to pledge to become carbon neutral by 2030 should include guidance around possible changes to organisational practice and if possible, a form of incentive for doing so. This could be informed by case studies of changes implemented by Glasgow City Council.

5 - The city commits itself to become a carbon literate organisation through the roll out of Carbon Literacy training. The city also commits to advocating the roll out of carbon literacy training in other organisations across the city.

Strongly agree

39 - Undertake a Carbon Impact Assessment for every action taken by the city, by making it a requirement of all committee papers - similarly to the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process.

Tend to agree

The requirement to undertake a Carbon Impact Assessment is potentially useful, provided it does not become a tick box exercise or add unnecessary bureaucracy.

50 - Sign the Edinburgh Declaration on post-2020 global biodiversity framework as part membership of ICLEI cities for nature.

Don't know

52 - Undertake a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) to confirm Glasgow's commitment to the UN SDGs.

Strongly agree

9. What actions, if any are missing from the Communication and Community Empowerment theme?

Public awareness of climate change is increasing – two thirds of the Glasgow population feel it is an urgent problem¹. This provides a strong basis for starting public conversations around

how Glasgow should respond. Although we broadly agree with recommendations in this theme, careful consideration is needed around how they are delivered. Public engagement should account for differences in levels of understanding of climate change, as well different attitudes. In addition, a range of engagement approaches will be needed to reach a cross-section of the Glasgow population. All community engagement should align with the National Standards for Community Engagement².

Conversations about climate change can be facilitated by focusing on everyday actions and when aligned with broader conversations about place³. For example, gauging public opinion on potential neighbourhood improvements can be considered in relation to how climate change objectives might also be delivered. Now is an opportune moment to be engaging with the public around this issue. Changes to working practice mean that many people are spending more time in their local area and may therefore be more interested in participating in public conversations. This was to some extent illustrated by the strong response to the 'Spaces for People' map-based consultation, although more affluent areas received more feedback.

The Place Standard Tool has been adapted to incorporate climate considerations and can be used virtually to identify local priorities. During periods where movement restrictions are in place, users could assess their area using Google Street view. Participatory budgeting (PB) is another way for local people to participate in conversations around climate change. Glasgow City Council have already demonstrated a strong commitment to mainstreaming this process⁴, and the Scottish Government had previously set a target of getting local authorities to allocate 1% of their budget to PB by 2021. PB cannot, however, be delivered in a uniform way, communities of place or interest must be part of a co-productive approach from the outset.

Theme 2 - Just and Inclusive Place

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following actions?

6 - The city and partners will continue to invest in programmes to enable young Glaswegians to access and succeed in new green job opportunities. Engaging with further and higher education institutions, ensuring that the curriculum and training they offer supports green opportunities.

Strongly agree

Young people are some of the best informed and passionate citizens in relation to climate change. Climate anxiety is a serious and growing problem as many young people are acutely aware of the projected impacts within their lifetime⁵. Their fears about the negative impacts of climate change should, where possible, be ameliorated through opportunities for young people to work in a role that contributes positively to reducing the city's carbon footprint and mitigating climate impacts.

23 - Continue to work with Scottish Government to maximise funding for Area Based Schemes to invest in improving energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty in private sector housing.

Strongly agree

27 - Review and update the Glasgow Standard to ensure all new affordable homes achieve net zero carbon performance.

Strongly agree

34 - Work with partners in the city to transition Glasgow's economy from linear to circular, making it more inclusive and sustainable.

Strongly agree

43 - Set Up Glasgow's Just Transition Commission to ensure the burden of climate impacts is shared equitably and that all in Glasgow have equitable opportunities of access and success in our low carbon economy.

Strongly agree

44 - Implement the Fairer Scotland Duty in decisions and actions made in response to the Climate Emergency, ensuring that strategic decision-making helps to tackle inequality by following Fairer Scotland Duty's guidance for public bodies.

Strongly agree

11. What actions, if any are missing from the Just and Inclusive Place theme?

No response

Theme 3 - Well Connected and Thriving City

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following actions?

4 - The city and partners to support the adoption of circular practices across the city through capacity building programmes, in line with the new Circular economy route map for the city.

Strongly agree

7 - Establish a framework of engagement with local energy co-operatives, enabling them to be set up and providing support.

Tend to agree

Energy co-operatives take significant resources and volunteer time to set up. Not all communities in Glasgow are well equipped to take on such a task. There is an additional question to be considered around whether or not the Council have the capacity to meaningfully support co-operatives.

8 - Develop a first of its kind Net Zero Plan for the city to become Net Zero by 2045.

Strongly agree

9 - Explore the feasibility of a workplace car park levy, ring fenced to fund sustainable transport in the city.

Tend to agree

While the introduction of a workplace parking levy has proved successful at reducing congestion in cities like Nottingham⁶, the current uncertainty around the future of workspaces means that it may not be most opportune moment to implement this policy.

11 - Enable rapid and strategic shift to electric vehicles through increasing the current rate of deployment of EV charging infrastructure.

Tend to agree

15 - Reduce the need to own and use a car through measures in the City Development Plan 3, Locality Plans and Glasgow Transport Strategy. Including, Low Emission Zones, Bus gates.

Strongly agree

16 - Explore the feasibility of subsidised public transport through salary sacrifice scheme similar to that available to on site staff.

Tend to agree

17 - Explore the feasibility of subsidised EV purchase of EV for city staff through salary sacrifice scheme.

Tend to disagree

Unlike rural parts of Scotland where electric vehicles will be an important means of ensuring mobility, we feel that more emphasis should be placed on delivering high quality and sustainable public transport, as well as ensuring the provision of good quality active travel

infrastructure. Recent research has shown that the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure in the UK can support population health and reduce health inequalities⁷. The co-benefits of active travel (de-carbonisation benefits, population health, reduced congestion, greener and more attractive neighbourhoods, and better air quality make it a much more beneficial policy than investment in electric vehicles. It is also important to recognise that the Scottish Government have committed to reducing the number of vehicle kms across Scotland by 20% by 2030⁸.

25 - Require Glasgow's Gold Hybrid plus 20% low and zero carbon generating technologies (LZCGT) or better, to be achieved for all new build new homes.

Don't know

26 - Require Glasgow's Gold Hybrid plus 20% low and zero carbon generating technologies (LZCGT) or better, to be achieved for all new non-domestic development.

Don't know

28 - Adopt the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) which will identify areas suitable for investment in renewable energy generation and heating in the city.

Strongly agree

29 - Develop a Carbon Neutral Innovation District in the GCID. This will act as a catalyst and exemplar for rolling out across the city.

Strongly agree

30 - Deliver projects that utilise the recovery of heat from geothermal sources learning from Duke Street and Tennent's Brewery projects.

Don't know

31 - Deliver heat and energy generation projects including distribution of heat from parks in Glasgow based on existing feasibility studies.

Tend to agree

32 - Enable and encourage all households in Glasgow to minimise waste arisings and to recycle.

Strongly agree

Only a quarter of Glasgow's household waste is recycled. This is much lower than the other 3 major Scottish cities⁹. Although there are challenges relating to the high proportion of Glasgow's housing stock being flats¹⁰, this needs to improve considerably. Reducing waste and increasing recycling to a considerable extent will require major structural changes to the way in which these services are delivered, as well as changes that are beyond the scope of Glasgow City Council to implement.

33 - Ban single use plastics in the city, using council facilities, including schools as a pilot.

Strongly agree

We would like to see a timeframe assigned to this commitment.

35 - Introduce appropriate resourcing dedicated to monitoring and enforcement of kerbside waste recycling in the city in line with the new Waste Strategy and Scottish Government Circular Economy Bill.

Strongly agree

37 - Upgrade insulation and heating of all building stock in the city, city council leading by example.

Strongly agree

38 - Increase the amount of renewable energy such as solar thermal, PV or heat pumps in the city to represent 20 % of total energy demand.

Tend to agree

40 - Ban gas heating systems in all new buildings within the city boundary.

Tend to agree

While we strongly agree with this point in principle, we would not wish for this transition to cause financial hardship for people on low incomes. Alternative heat sources need to be regulated in ways that ensure they remain affordable.

48 - Review the need for an energy services company (ESCO) for the city as appropriate in relation to local energy generation and distribution projects.

Don't know

49 - Explore options to utilise the ongoing development of Glasgow's Low Emission Zone to contribute towards carbon reductions from transport in the city centre.

Strongly agree

We would welcome the introduction of Low Emission Neighbourhoods in areas where air quality is poor and is caused primarily by transport from other areas. Toxic air is predicted to reduce the life expectancy of Europeans by approximately a year¹¹. Air quality tends to be worse in more deprived areas where car ownership is lower. It should therefore be treated as an issue of environmental injustice, with actions to reduce differential impacts put in place.

13. What actions, if any are missing from the Well Connected and Thriving City theme?

If we take 'Well Connected' to encompass transport related actions, then we feel that the strategy should prioritise transport actions in the following order: 1. reduce the need to travel altogether by ensuring that people can access what they need within their local area (in line with the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods), 2. promote and invest in active travel through new infrastructure and better placemaking, 3. invest in sustainable public transport, and 4. support the transition to electric vehicles. This aligns with the National Transport Strategy, which states that investment decisions should consider the sustainable travel hierarchy¹².

There have been delays in constructing new active travel infrastructure, including a moratorium on the Avenues construction work until after COP26. It would be good to see a clear understanding that active travel and other related sustainable transport developments

need to be accelerated if Glasgow is to achieve substantial decarbonisation of transport by 2030.

Theme 4- Health and Wellbeing

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following actions?

9 - Explore the feasibility of a workplace car park levy, ring fenced to fund sustainable transport in the city.

Tend to agree

12 - Work with bus operators to support rapid transition to cleaner public transport as part of the City's Low Emissions Zone.

Tend to agree

While it is important to ensure cleaner public transport in the city centre, harmful air quality is a problem in many Glasgow neighbourhoods. Decisive action is need in these areas to protect public health.

16 - Explore the feasibility of subsidised public transport through salary sacrifice scheme similar to that available to on site staff.

Don't know

22 - Identify Vacant and Derelict Land for greening and rewilding in combination with renewable energy generation measures.

Strongly agree

Small scale improvements to the quality of vacant and derelict land can make a big difference to public perceptions of space¹³. Any such improvements should incorporate measures to remove litter and fly-tipping.

36 - To understand and baseline meat consumption in the city, significantly reducing meat consumption in the city through communications campaigns highlighting benefits of lower-carbon plant-based options generally.

Tend to agree

Messaging around food choices need to be delivered sensitively. Balanced educational materials on the impact on CO2 emissions of reducing meat intake would be welcomed.

15. What actions, if any are missing from the Health and Wellbeing theme?

We would also welcome consideration for the establishment of low emission neighbourhoods, particularly in areas where the local population are adversely affected by poor air quality due to passing traffic.

Theme 5 - Green Recovery

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following actions?

4 - The city and partners to support the adoption of circular practices across the city through capacity building programmes, in line with the new Circular economy route map for the city.

Strongly agree

Glasgow City Council can only do so much to encourage circular economic activity. Fundamental changes to the way in which businesses procure, use and dispose of materials are needed.

8 - Develop a first of its kind Net Zero Plan for the city to become Net Zero by 2045.

Strongly agree

This plan should provide a clear path to becoming Net Zero based on a range of ambitious and influential policies and actions.

9 - Explore the feasibility of a workplace car park levy, ring fenced to fund sustainable transport in the city.

Tend to agree

13 - Deliver rapid transition of council's fleet to electric, supporting the city's existing fleet strategy's target of becoming low carbon by 2030.

Tend to agree

14 - Transition the fleet of private hire taxis to zero emission vehicles by 2030.

Strongly agree

18 - Implement the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network's Blueprint to create green & biodiversity corridors in the city by improving open space provision and increasing tree cover.

Strongly agree

19 - Expand Local Nature Reserves in the city and protect wider areas of open space in the city for greening and public use.

Strongly agree

The protection of open space should include measures to keep them clean and free from litter and fly-tipping.

20 - Increase investment in peatland restoration in the city region to increase capacity for carbon sequestration.

Strongly agree

21 - Increase tree planting on council owned or managed land, which will deliver 21% canopy cover citywide, supporting Scotland's national target of 21% tree cover by 2032.

Strongly agree

22 - Identify Vacant and Derelict Land for greening and rewilding in combination with renewable energy generation measures.

Strongly agree

24 - Prepare an investment improvement plan for older (pre-1919) tenements and private sector housing

Strongly agree

This commitment should be about exploring avenues to secure funding for this type of work.

41 - Develop a Climate Risk assessment for the City, highlighting risks and opportunities of climate impacts on the city and its people.

Strongly agree

42 - Develop and adopt an early warning system to prepare for extreme weather events such as heatwaves and flooding.

Strongly agree

45 - All pension fund investors in the city to develop a strategy for divestment from the fossil fuel industry.

Strongly agree

17. What actions, if any are missing from the Green Recovery theme?

Given that Glasgow has declared a climate and **ecological** emergency, we feel the current environmental and ecological quality of the city needs more consideration. Litter and fly tipping are major problems in the city (based on public attitudes and levels compared to other cities)^{14,15}, and are particularly problematic in the more deprived neighbourhoods. We feel it is important that the Council take some responsibility for the issue and make a commitment to work with local communities to improve the situation. Fostering a collective sense of responsibility and avoiding blame is important.

18. Please use the space below for any further comments or suggestions you may have about the Climate Emergency Implementation Plan.

Further comments about the focus and ambition of the plan are offered under headings below:

Scope of influence

It would be helpful if Glasgow City Council's (GCC) scope of influence and ambition were clearly set out at the beginning of the plan. For example, we feel that the GCC should aim to influence climate action in the following ways:

1. Adjusting its own working practice and estate to become less polluting, carbon reliant and vulnerable to climate impacts.
2. Ensuring that all GCC decisions, policies and development proposals are climate proof.
3. Supporting organisations across Glasgow to become more climate conscious.
4. Raising public awareness of climate change and enabling the population to make more climate conscious decisions.

More broadly, we would like to see climate change embedded within all Council policies and plans. In doing so, it would become part of organisational culture rather than a separate topic area.

Becoming carbon neutral and meeting the zero emissions target

We believe that this plan is fundamentally about becoming carbon neutral and achieving the zero emissions target, whilst also ensuring that Glasgow becomes more climate resilient, the most vulnerable members of the population are protected from the worst impacts of climate change and economic opportunities are realised. While this plan is more ambitious and comprehensive than previous strategies, it is unlikely that the actions included are ambitious enough to allow Glasgow to meet these targets. Although climate related actions and projects can help to deliver some improvements, the conversation needs to move towards how the Council can facilitate and support whole systems change.

Public engagement

It would be useful to provide an easy-to-understand rationale (social, economic and environmental) for declaring a climate emergency and committing to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. For example, Brighton and Hove Council have included 10 reasons for pledging to become carbon neutral on their website¹⁶. Similarly, Lambeth Council communicate their plans to become carbon neutral around 10 action areas¹⁷. This should be part of the engagement strategy leading up to COP26.

Recognising climate change as a threat multiplier

Recent flooding in England and Wales, in which people are simultaneously being told that it is unsafe to stay at home (due to flooding) and to leave (due to Covid-19) is an example of how climate change can exacerbate existing problems. The impacts of current pandemic are being most acutely felt by the most vulnerable, and climate change is predicted to have a similarly disproportionate impact. For those already living in precarious circumstances, climate change has the potential to have a severe and lasting impact. At a population level, this impact could increase inequalities.

A circular economy and circular living

The principles of a circular economy (i.e., to reduce waste and pollution, use less, keep products in use), can also be applied at an individual level. This requires education and transparency around how we can reduce consumption, re-use products, how we choose the food we eat and how waste is managed. This would align well with awareness raising around how everyday actions can shape climate change and reduce our carbon footprint.

A transport revolution

Greater ambition and investment are needed to reduce transport emissions. While progress has been made in reducing domestic and industrial emissions to around half of the 2008 levels, reductions in transport emissions have been modest¹⁸. There is currently a lot of emphasis on shifting to electric vehicles – which is part of the solution – although in cities the main change should be to encourage people to travel less, to travel actively and to use public transport.

Aligning with wider environmental and ecological objectives

Given that Glasgow has declared a climate and ecological emergency, we feel that the plan should link more to wider environmental issues and the overall environmental condition of the city, including issues such as litter, fly-tipping and air quality. Building environmental consciousness and awareness in the population should encompass all of these related ecological issues.

Monitoring progress

The plan should provide some indication of how Glasgow City Council plan to monitor progress towards becoming carbon neutral. The action plan should include a clear indication of how carbon neutrality can be achieved through a combination of lowering emissions and offsetting actions. Although the plan includes a definition of carbon neutrality, a clear explanation of how it will be achieved is needed.

Acknowledging the wider city region

It is also important to acknowledge that Glasgow is not an island. The export and import of goods, services and people are an important part of Glasgow's carbon footprint. This should be referenced through consideration for Glasgow's regional and international reach. Air travel is an important contributor to the city region's carbon footprint. Although the airport does not sit within the Glasgow City boundary, it is an important means of generating tourism and revenue for the city, as well as contributing to the carbon footprint of many

Glasgow residents. We feel that this should be recognised in the plan, even if it is not ultimately accounted for in terms of emissions.

Delivering COP26

COP26 should be a carbon neutral event, including travel from delegates. Offsetting measures such as planting should benefit local communities across Glasgow. Actions to support the delivery of the event should be made with long-term environmental considerations in mind.

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